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DE RUEHKO #1729/01 1760451
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5348
INFO RUCNARF/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA PRIORITY 8544
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY 0920
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 2273
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 001729

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/24/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KN](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: D/SENK DISCUSSES BROADCASTING INTO THE DPRK

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Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer per 1.4 (b/d)

11. (C) Summary: In separate meetings June 19, Deputy Special Envoy for North Korea Christian Whiton urged Diet, Prime Minister's Office and MOFA interlocutors to expand U.S.-Japan cooperation in broadcasting medium-wave from Japan to the DPRK or helping to financially support independent groups that are broadcasting into North Korea. Although the Diet and government representatives were generally supportive of looking into ways to build bilateral cooperation in this area, the PM's Office and MOFA representatives raised technical issues, namely the purported inability to broadcast effectively medium-wave transmission from Japan into the North via existing facilities. On the broader issue of Japan-DPRK relations, LDP Dietmember Yuriko Koike expressed concern about Japan giving away too much to the North in return for improved relations. End Summary.

12. (C) During meetings at the Diet, Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry June 19, Deputy Special Envoy for North Korea Christian Whiton explained that SENK Jay Lefkowitz has adopted a three-fold approach to dealing with human rights abuses in North Korea. Meeting separately with ruling LDP Dietmember (and former Minister of Defense) Yuriko Koike, PM's Office Counselor for the Abductions Issue Naoki Fujii and MOFA Northeast Asia Director Shigeo Yamada, Whiton explained that Lefkowitz's primary focus is to raise the profile of human rights abuses in the DPRK with foreign governments and multilateral actors, such as the UN; assist with resettlement of North Korean refugees and encourage China to stop mistreating and repatriating an estimated 50,000 North Koreans within its own borders in violation of its international commitments; and find ways to change the situation in North Korea from within. Lefkowitz hopes to discuss these issues further during a likely visit the week of July 21, Whiton explained.

13. (C) During all three meetings, Whiton stressed the importance of medium-wave broadcasting into North Korea from Japan as one way to address problems in the DPRK. A private Japanese group, "Shiokaze," already broadcasts short-wave programming from Japan twice per day, Koike noted, and she regards these broadcasts and those by other DPRK defector groups as helping to "open a crack" in the wall. In all of his meetings, Whiton drew on remarks by Special Envoy Lefkowitz that seeking improved human rights in the DPRK is an important end in itself, but also can be a means to greater long-term security, particularly for neighboring countries such as Japan.

14. (C) Providing U.S. and Japanese funding for broadcasts from Japan and elsewhere by independent groups could be a suitable fall-back position to direct U.S. broadcasts from Japan and would highlight the importance of our two liberal democracies cooperating with each other, Whiton continued. He informed his interlocutors that the United States, recognizing the value of a multilateral effort, has helped to put together an informal donors group of mostly northern European countries to fund some of these independent groups, and it would be useful if Japan could consider providing funding. Koike acknowledged that broadcasting can be a good vehicle for demonstrating U.S.-Japan cooperation on an issue that incorporates both human rights and security issues. She promised to study ways to further enhance broadcasts to the DPRK from Japan.

15. (C) Counselor Fujii of the PM's office acknowledged that while the broader issue of human rights is very important to Japan, abductions is the main focus. With this in mind, government-funded radio broadcasts to the DPRK are meant to send a message of hope to the abductees and inform North Koreans about the abductions issue. The Japanese pay for two broadcasts a day -- one in Japanese and one in Korean -- for 30 minutes each. In 2007, the budget for these broadcasts was approximately \$1 million. Fujii noted that because Japanese abductees are kept isolated in the DPRK, North Korean defectors have never reported any information about them. In response to Fujii's statement about difficulties of broadcasting medium-wave from Japan, Whiton noted that cooperation between American and Japanese technical experts should be able to address this. Fujii said that one area of possible cooperation could be in sharing radio broadcast contents.

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16. (C) MOFA's Yamada also raised the difficulty of broadcasting medium-wave from Japan, asserting that the radio waves are unable to make it all the way from Japan to North Korea via existing facilities. That said, Yamada responded positively to Whiton's offer to see how our experts could share information on this. Yamada also pledged to look into what funds, if any, might be available to support the independent groups broadcasting into North Korea.

17. (C) Looking ahead to a visit to Japan by Special Envoy Lefkowitz in July, Koike advised that he use the opportunity to "speak to the people" and "dispel rumors" through events with the foreign and domestic press. She also suggested he meet with abductee family groups and lawmakers concerned with the issue, including members of her supra-partisan Diet league. She confirmed sharp divisions in the Diet over DPRK-related issues, saying that while everyone wants the abductees and the JAL Yodo-go hijackers returned to Japan, the eventual resolution of the issue must be comprehensive enough to include all of the Japanese who may have been abducted. She expressed concern that Prime Minister Fukuda seemed intent on normalizing relations with the DPRK, and said that she and other members of her Diet group, including former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Takeo Hiranuma and Shoichi Nakagawa are opposed to rushing into an agreement. The "sentiment of the people," she said, is against resuming normalization talks before the abductions issue is resolved. Speaking about human rights issues and focusing on the need for the DPRK to return all abductees will be a very effective message, she advised.

18. (C) Koike expressed concern for the new administration of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, in light of recent protests in South Korea, speculating that perhaps the DPRK might be providing some sort of "instructions." She noted that Japan is "very comfortable" with President Lee Myung-bak, particularly after the administration of Roh Moo-hyun. She worried that the anti-Lee movement is expanding and could "affect everything," including South Korean views of the abductee issue. Parenthetically, she

remarked that she is very interested in learning more about the documents from the Yongbyon nuclear reactor. She worried that lifting sanctions will allow the DPRK to obtain parts for weapons, making it a larger security issue.

19. (U) D/SENK Whiton cleared this message.
SCHIEFFER